



Meeting Summary August 12, 2015

Attendance

Panel Members: Phyllis Cook, Chair
Mohammad Saleem, Vice Chair
Phillips Engelke
Don Taylor

DPZ Staff: Valdis Lazdins, Bill Mackey, Dace Blaumanis, Mary Smith

Howard Square, Parcel B #15-12

Owner/Developer: Atapco Properties, Inc.
Architect: Henneman + Associates
Landscape: Bohler Engineering
Engineer: Benchmark Engineering

1. Call to Order – DAP Chair Phyllis Cook opened the meeting at 7:33 pm, calling for introductions of the Panel, staff and project team.

2. Review of Howard Square, Parcel B, #15-12 – David Polonsky, Owner/Developer, Atapco Properties, stated the project was revised because the proposed underground parking was too costly. In response to two key DAP recommendations, to harmonize the two building's elevations and to provide cross connections for residents to pass through from the housing to the commercial center, the project was redesigned. The apartment building design is known as a Texas donut with parking wrapped by the apartment units. The design is similar to that of the apartment building across Rockside Avenue. The project has two phases. Phase 1 is the 283-unit apartment building with 10,000 square feet of retail and is the focus of this presentation. Phase 2 is 40,000 square feet of commercial with 20,000 square feet of office and structured parking replacing the surface parking lot. Phase 1 will begin building in spring.

Chris Malagari, Civil Engineer, Benchmark Engineering, gave a brief history of the Howard Square development, noting that Parcel B is five and a half acres. The development has nine phases; currently, the seventh phase of townhouses is being developed. Development on Parcel C, west of Parcel B and known as the Verde apartment building, is a LEED Platinum building. Parcel's B topography from west to east drops 30-32 feet vertically. Both public roads, Rockside Avenue and Hearthside Way, have been built.

Jeff Henneman, Architect, Henneman + Associates, asserted that this wrapper-style building is becoming the established form of multi-family buildings in suburban locations. He stated there are aesthetic advantages in capturing all the parking inside the shell of residential units. He pointed out the extension of the major wing on the east and the presence of two courtyards that break up the building's facades. The five- to six-story apartment building has flat roofs, providing a more urban looking design.

Eric McWilliams, Landscape Architect, Bohler Engineering, stated that the new design of the apartment building allows space for some ornamental trees between the building and the sidewalk. There will be some trees in the Phase 1 parking area. The two gated courtyards will function as amenity areas for the residents. Mr. Polonsky explained that the trees in front of the Phase 1 retail space will be a permanent feature and that the pergola area at the end of the pedestrian plaza will offer seating, likely related to a restaurant.

Pursuant to each motion duly made and seconded, DAP adopted the following recommendations for the project. These recommendations will be forwarded to the Director of the Department of Planning and Zoning.

DAP Vice Chair Mohammad Saleem offered the following motion:

1. "That the applicant consider the end corner, the [building] elevation detail on Rockside Avenue, both on Route 1 and Hearthside Way, to revisit it." Seconded by P. Cook.

Vote: 4-0 to approve.

DAP Chair Phyllis Cook offered the following motion:

2. "That the applicant pay closer attention to pedestrian crosswalks, not only at the entrance to Rockside Avenue from Route 1 but also pedestrian walkways across Hearthside Way and Rockside Avenue." Seconded by M. Saleem.

Vote: 4-0 to approve.

DAP member Phil Engelke offered the following motion:

3. "That as the applicant selects the streetscape furniture that [the furniture relates] more toward the character of the building and to the more urban environment, with the exception of the acorn lights." Seconded by D. Taylor.

Vote: 4-0 to approve.

DAP member Don Taylor offered the following motion:

4. "That the record shows that this Panel strongly supports the solution to this project." Seconded by P. Cook.

Vote: 4-0 to approve.

3. Call to Adjourn – DAP Chair Phyllis Cook adjourned the meeting at 8:28 pm.